

On November 6, 2007, Congressman John F. Tierney (D-MA), Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, made the following statement regarding the recent actions in Pakistan by President Musharraf, calling upon the United States to take the lead in pressing for restoration of the Pakistani peoples' rights, release of political prisoners and return to constitutional government.

"It is imperative that any Pakistani government have the legitimacy of public support behind it if it is to be truly an effective partner in dealing with extremism and terror," Tierney stated. "Musharraf's conduct endangers any prospect for Pakistan to form a united stand against malevolent forces as long as extra-constitutional conditions continue and the military is cracking down on civil society instead of confronting terrorists and militants."

Chairman Tierney continued, reinforcing the vital U.S. national security interests at stake in the destiny of Pakistan, "If you care about bringing the perpetrators of 9/11 – including Osama bin Laden – to justice; if you care about the safety and success of U.S. soldiers fighting in Afghanistan; if you care about keeping nuclear materials out of the hands of terrorists; then, you must stand with the lawyers, the judiciary, the human rights activists, the journalists, and the democracy advocates of Pakistan."

According to Chairman Tierney, the international community must strongly urge President Musharraf and the Pakistani military to:

Cancel the state of emergency and the "Provisional Constitutional Order", and restore fundamental freedoms;

Respect judicial processes and restore judicial independence by reinstating the judiciary;

Respect the rule of law and human rights and immediately release political detainees;

President Musharraf should give up his post of army chief when the "parliamentary pass"

on his dual hat ends;

Provide for a neutral caretaker government to be formed, in consultation with all opposition parties, to oversee the polls, and reconstitute the Election Commission of Pakistan; and, finally

Hold, as scheduled, within 60 days, free, fair and transparent elections if parliament completes its five-year term on November 15, 2007, or within 90 days if parliament is dissolved earlier with participation of all political parties and leaders, including those in exile.